

REMARKS

The Office Action dated 07/05/2005 has again been carefully reviewed.

During the review, applicant decided to further amend the claims to indicate that neither the suture passages nor an extension of the suture passages will intersect the long axis of the threaded body. This limitation is clearly shown in Figure 5B and is clearly taught by Figure 5A.

Applicant believes the claims as thus amended define an invention that is patentable over the cited Stone patent as well as Paulos, et al (US Patent 4,988,351) which has been cited in the parent applications. In particular, the Paulos patent does not disclose or teach suture passages that do not intersect the long axis of the shank or body of the device. As clearly shown in Figures 7-9 of the Paulos patent, the suture passages are oriented so that an extension thereof will intersect the long axis of the shank.

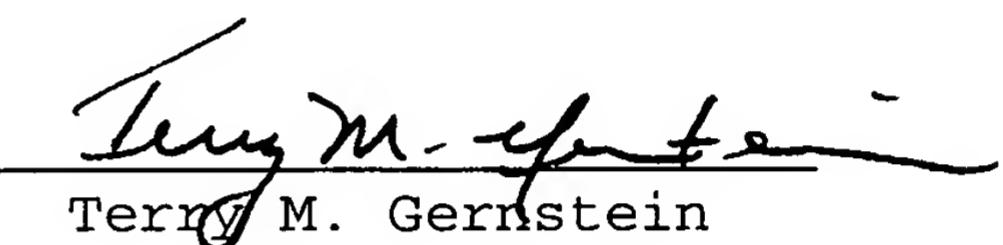
As has been previously discussed, this orientation makes it difficult and clumsy to thread sutures through the passages.

Therefore, the device as now claimed by applicant has structure that is not shown or taught in the prior art, which structure provides advantages over the prior art that are not suggested in the prior art.

Accordingly, it is believed that the claims as now presented patentably define over the prior art and should be allowed.

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, review and allowance are requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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